

# 1. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: A NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

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## Introduction

The national curriculum states the legal requirement that:

*Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:*

- *promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, and*
- *prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life*

*and*

*All state schools... must teach religious education... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.*

(‘The national curriculum in England: Framework document’, September 2013, p.4).

This national curriculum framework for RE (NCFRE) in England has been developed by the RE Council of England and Wales, through a review of RE parallel to the Department for Education’s National Curriculum Review, published in September 2013. The key audience is the range of bodies which have responsibility for making RE syllabuses in England. This includes local authority SACREs (which have responsibility for the RE curriculum through an agreed syllabus for local authority schools), academies, free schools, faith and belief communities which run schools and governing bodies in some individual schools. The REC also commends this framework as a contribution to teachers’ thinking, and to public understanding of RE’s role and place in schools today.

The NCFRE does not claim to be an exhaustive or final description of the place, value and scope of RE in 2013, and it is not an official document. However, the breadth of the RE Council’s membership (over 60 national bodies listed inside the front cover), representing professional religious educators and national organisations of religion and belief, gives this document wide currency. The extensive consultation about draft versions of this framework means the document provides a widely supported platform for RE which can encourage a coherent range of RE syllabuses.

The NCFRE follows the structure of the DfE's National Curriculum Review, so that RE has documentation that parallels the subjects of the national curriculum. RE is described in terms of purpose, aims and programmes of study for each age group. It also gives clear guidance on RE in the early years and RE for students aged 14-19. As RE is a core subject of the curriculum the Review has largely followed the ways in which English, Mathematics and Science are described in the national curriculum, including examples and notes for key stages 1-3.

In describing progression in RE, the NCFRE illustrates how pupils will develop increasing understanding of wide areas of RE subject knowledge, and also how pupils can develop religious literacy, including the skills of:

- investigating religions and worldviews through varied experiences, approaches and disciplines;
- reflecting on and expressing their own ideas and the ideas of others with increasing creativity and clarity;
- becoming increasingly able to respond to religions and worldviews in an informed, rational and insightful way.

# Religious education

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## Purpose of study

Religious education contributes dynamically to children and young people's education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. In RE they learn about and from religions and worldviews<sup>7</sup> in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully. Teaching therefore should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities. It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diverse religions and worldviews. Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

## Aims

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

### A. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals;
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom<sup>8</sup> found in religions and worldviews;
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

### B. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities;
- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues;
- appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or a worldview<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup>The phrase 'religions and worldviews' is used in this document to refer to Christianity, other principal religions represented in Britain, smaller religious communities and non-religious worldviews such as Humanism. The phrase is meant to be inclusive, and its precise meaning depends on the context in which it occurs, eg in terms of belief, practice or identity.

<sup>8</sup>The sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews will include the key texts, the teachings of key leaders, and key thinkers from different traditions and communities. Examples include the Bible, the Torah and the Bhagavad Gita; the Buddha, Jesus Christ, the Prophet Muhammad, Guru Nanak and humanist philosophers. Other sources of wisdom might come from texts, thinkers, leaders and scientists in the contemporary world as well as from experience and informed personal reflection and conscience.

<sup>9</sup>The RE programme of study usually refers to 'religions and worldviews' to describe the field of enquiry. Here, however, the aim is to consider religion and belief itself as a phenomenon which has both positive and negative features, and is open to many interpretations: in this aspect of the aims, pupils are to engage with the concept of religion and non-religious belief, not merely with individual examples, and similar critiques should apply to both.

**C. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively;
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all;
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

## **RE in the school curriculum**

RE is a statutory subject of the school curriculum of maintained schools. Academies and free schools are contractually required through the terms of their funding to make provision for the teaching of RE to all pupils on the school roll. Alongside the subject's contribution to pupils' mental, cognitive and linguistic development, RE offers distinctive opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. RE lessons should offer a structured and safe space during curriculum time for reflection, discussion, dialogue and debate. Lessons should also allow for timely and sensitive responses to be made to unforeseen events of a religious, moral or philosophical nature, whether local, national or global.

## **The breadth of RE**

The law requires that local authority RE agreed syllabuses and RE syllabuses used in academies that are not designated with a religious character 'must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. This means that from the ages of 5 to 19 pupils in schools<sup>10</sup> learn about diverse religions and worldviews including Christianity and the other principal religions. Some schools with a religious character will prioritise learning about and from one religion, but all types of school need to recognise the diversity of the UK and the importance of learning about its religions and worldviews, including those with a significant local presence.

## **Attainment target\***

By the end of each key stage, students are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

*\* Note: the wording of the attainment target for RE follows the same form of words found in the programmes of study of the national curriculum subjects*

<sup>10</sup>Except those withdrawn by their parents (or by themselves if aged over 18).

## Subject content

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### RE in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils should encounter religions and worldviews through special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They should listen to and talk about stories. Pupils can be introduced to subject specific words and use all their senses to explore beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of and wonder at the world in which they live. Religious education is a legal requirement for all pupils on the school roll, including all those in the reception year.

In line with the DfE's 2013 EYFS Profile RE should, through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity, provide these opportunities for pupils.

#### **Communication and language:**

- children listen with enjoyment to stories, songs and poems from different sources and traditions and respond with relevant comments, questions or actions;
- use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events;
- answer 'who', 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences in response to stories, experiences or events from different sources;
- talk about how they and others show feelings;
- develop their own narratives in relation to stories they hear from different traditions.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development:**

- children understand that they can expect others to treat their needs, views, cultures and beliefs with respect;
- work as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly, understanding that groups of people, including adults and children, need agreed values and codes of behaviour to work together harmoniously;
- talk about their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable;
- think and talk about issues of right and wrong and why these questions matter;
- respond to significant experiences showing a range of feelings when appropriate;
- have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and are sensitive to those of others;
- have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs, and those of other people;
- show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships.

### **Understanding the world**

- children talk about similarities and differences between themselves and others, among families, communities and traditions;
- begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people;
- explore, observe and find out about places and objects that matter in different cultures and beliefs.

### **Expressive arts and design**

- children use their imagination in art, music, dance, imaginative play, and role-play and stories to represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings;
- respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and taste.

### **Literacy**

- children are given access to a wide range of books, poems and other written materials to ignite their interest.

### **Mathematics**

- children recognise, create and describe some patterns, sorting and ordering objects simply.

**These learning intentions for RE are developed from relevant areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (DfE 2013). RE syllabus makers will want to provide detailed examples.**

## Key stage 1

Pupils should develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews<sup>11</sup>, recognising their local, national and global contexts. They should use basic subject specific vocabulary. They should raise questions and begin to express their own views in response to the material they learn about and in response to questions about their ideas.

More specifically pupils should be taught to:

### Requirements

Note: as this is not a statutory document, these are not legal requirements as in the national curriculum.

### Examples and notes

Note: the examples from religions and worldviews given below do not constitute a syllabus but illustrate what is meant in the first column

<p>A1. Recall and name different beliefs and practices, including festivals, worship, rituals and ways of life, in order to find out about the meanings behind them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils enact stories and celebrations from Easter, Divali or Id ul Fitr, finding out about what the stories told at the festivals mean, e.g. through welcoming visitors to talk about their festivals</li> <li>• Pupils experience thanking and being thanked, praising and being praised, and notice some ways Christians or Jewish people believe they can thank and praise God</li> <li>• Linking to English and computing, pupils recount a visit to a local church using digital photographs and find out about the meanings of symbols for God that they saw there.</li> </ul>
<p>A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some religious and moral stories, exploring and discussing sacred writings and sources of wisdom and recognising the traditions from which they come.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils choose their favourite 'wise sayings' from different sources or key leaders and talk about what makes these sayings wise, and what difference it would make if people followed them</li> <li>• Pupils retell (for example through drama) two different stories about Jesus considering what they mean. They compare the stories and think about what Christians today could learn from the stories</li> <li>• Linking to English, pupils respond to stories from Hindu, Muslim or Jewish sources by identifying the values which different characters in the stories showed, and recognising the religions from which the stories come</li> <li>• Pupils ask and answer 'who', 'where', 'how' and 'why' questions about religious stories and stories from non-religious worldviews.</li> </ul>
<p>A3. Recognise some different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils choose to find out about the symbols of two different religious traditions, looking for similarities between the ways they use common symbols such as light, water, trees or rock</li> <li>• Pupils discover how and why Muslims wash, bow and pray in a daily pattern, noticing similarities to another religion or worldview</li> <li>• Pupils select examples of religious artefacts from Christianity or Judaism that interest them, raising lists of questions about them and finding out what they mean and how they are used in festivals and worship</li> <li>• Pupils hear three moral stories, for example from Christians, Hindus and humanists, and think about whether they are saying the same things about how people should behave.</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup>**Breadth:** in line with the law and the statement about breadth of learning on p15, good practice should enable pupils to study Christianity and at least one other example of a religion or worldview through key stage 1 in a coherent way.

## Requirements

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B1. Ask and respond to questions about what individuals and communities do, and why, so that pupils can identify what difference belonging to a community might make.

B2. Observe and recount different ways of expressing identity and belonging, responding sensitively for themselves.

B3. Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between different religions and worldviews.

## Examples and notes

Note: the examples from religions and worldviews given below do not constitute a syllabus but illustrate what is meant in the first column

- Pupils find out about what people with different religions and worldviews do to celebrate the fruitfulness of the earth (e.g. in Harvest festivals, and in generosity to those in need), responding to questions about being generous
- Pupils discuss reasons why some people go to mosques, synagogues or churches often, but other people never go to holy buildings, and why some people pray every day, but others not at all
- Linking to PSHE, pupils make lists of the different groups to which they belong and consider the ways these contribute to human happiness.
- Pupils learn about the daily life of a Muslim or Jewish child (eg from a teacher's use of persona dolls), and make an illustrated list of signs of belonging including using special food, clothing, prayer, scripture, family life, worship and festivities. Pupils make a list of the ways they show how they belong as well
- Pupils express creatively (e.g. in art, poetry or drama) their own ideas about the questions: Who am I? Where do I belong?
- Pupils watch a short film about the Hindu creation story and talk about different stages of the cycle of life.
- Pupils use a set of photos or a list of religious items they have encountered in key stage 1 RE to sort and order, saying which items are connected to a particular religion and which are connected to more than one religion
- Linking to English, pupils use key words (e.g. holy, sacred, scripture, festival, symbol, humanist) to present ideas or write about two different religions or worldviews about which they have learned.



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<p>C1. Explore questions about belonging, meaning and truth so that they can express their own ideas and opinions in response using words, music, art or poetry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils work in groups to use art, music and poetry to respond to ideas about God from different religions and worldviews, expressing ideas of their own and commenting on some ideas of others</li> <li>• Pupils ask and answer a range of 'how' and 'why' questions about how people practise their religion</li> <li>• Linking to 'Philosophy for Children', pupils think about and respond to 'big questions' in a classroom enquiry using a story of Adam and Eve or a video clip of children asking questions about God as a stimulus.</li> </ul>
<p>C2. Find out about and respond with ideas to examples of co-operation between people who are different.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils discuss stories of co-operation from different traditions and sources and make a 'Recipe for living together happily' or a 'Class charter for more kindness and less fighting'</li> <li>• Linking to English and PSHE pupils could play some collaborative games, and talk about how the games put the teaching of the 'Golden Rule' into action</li> <li>• Pupils notice and talk about the fact that people come from different religions, responding to the questions- 'How can we tell? How can we live together when we are all so different?'</li> </ul>
<p>C3. Find out about questions of right and wrong and begin to express their ideas and opinions in response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils respond to a quiet reflection or a guided visualisation by choosing one value they think the world needs more of today from a list of values, and by illustrating their choice in different media</li> <li>• Linking to English, pupils could ask questions about goodness, and write sentences that say what happens when people are kind, thankful, fair or generous, and what happens when people are unkind, ungrateful, unfair or mean</li> <li>• Pupils look at how different people have expressed their ideas about God, and think and talk about their own ideas about God.</li> </ul>

## Key stage 2

Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews<sup>42</sup>, recognising their local, national and global contexts. They should be introduced to an extended range of sources and subject specific vocabulary. They should be encouraged to be curious and to ask increasingly challenging questions about religion, belief, values and human life. Pupils should learn to express their own ideas in response to the material they engage with, identifying relevant information, selecting examples and giving reasons to support their ideas and views.

**More specifically pupils should be taught to:**

Requirements	Examples and notes
<p>Note: as this is not a statutory document, these are not legal requirements as in the national curriculum.</p>	<p>Note: the examples from religions and worldviews given below do not constitute a syllabus but illustrate what is meant in the first column</p>
<p>A1. Describe and make connections between different features of the religions and worldviews they study, discovering more about celebrations, worship, pilgrimages and the rituals which mark important points in life, in order to reflect on their significance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils make some connections between Hajj for Muslims and pilgrimage to Lourdes, Iona or 'the Holy Land' for Christians, describing the motives people have for making spiritual journeys</li> <li>• Pupils describe spiritual ways of celebrating different festivals, and reflect on the reasons why some people value such celebrations very highly, but others not at all</li> <li>• Pupils compare how Christians, Muslims, Hindus or humanists celebrate a marriage and express and argue for ideas of their own about partnership, in discussions or in writing.</li> </ul>
<p>A2. Describe and understand links between stories and other aspects of the communities they are investigating, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources of wisdom and to beliefs and teachings that arise from them in different communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linking to English, pupils consider how some texts from the Torah (e.g. the Shema), the Bible (e.g. 1 Corinthians 13) and the Qur'an (e.g. The 1st Surah, the Opening) are seen as sources of wisdom in different traditions. They respond to the ideas found in the texts with ideas of their own</li> <li>• Pupils investigate aspects of community life such as weekly worship, charitable giving or beliefs about prayer, showing their understanding and expressing ideas of their own</li> <li>• Pupils compare the texts in the Christian gospels that tell the stories of shepherds and wise men at Jesus' birth, exploring how they are remembered and celebrated in a range of Christmas festivities.</li> </ul>
<p>A3. Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils pursue an enquiry into beliefs about worship, relating the meanings of symbols and actions used in worship such as bowing down, making music together, sharing food or speaking to God (e.g. in prayer) to events and teachings from a religion they study</li> <li>• Pupils consider how the meanings of a parable of Jesus are expressed in poetry, video, stained glass and drama.</li> <li>• Pupils describe the impact of Hindu teaching about harmlessness (ahimsa) on questions about what people eat and how people treat animals. They express their own ideas.</li> </ul>

<sup>42</sup>Breadth: in line with the law and the statement about breadth of learning on p15 above, good practice should enable pupils to study Christianity and at least two other examples of a religion or worldview through key stage 2 in a coherent and progressive way.

## Requirements

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## Examples and notes

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B1. Observe and understand varied examples of religions and worldviews so that they can explain, with reasons, their meanings and significance to individuals and communities.

- Linking to History and Design Technology pupils consider how the architecture of churches, mosques, mandirs or gurdwaras expresses a community's way of life, values and beliefs
- Pupils develop their understanding of beliefs about life after death in two religions and humanism through seeking answers to their own questions and articulating reasons for their own ideas and responses
- Pupils use their detailed understanding of religious practice such as the Five Pillars of Islam and worship of a deity in a Hindu family and a mandir to describe the significance of being part of a religion.

B2. Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable, both in the diverse communities being studied and in their own lives.

- Pupils explore the lives of key leaders from Buddhist and Christian contemporary life, describing the challenges they have faced and the commitments by which they have lived
- Pupils find out about how celebrating Diwali brings the Hindu or Sikh community together, and expresses commitment to values of interdependence and generosity
- Linking to the expressive arts, pupils develop their own imaginative and creative ways of expressing some of their own commitments such as working hard at sport or music, caring for animals and the environment, loving their family or serving God.

B3. Observe and consider different dimensions of religion, so that they can explore and show understanding of similarities and differences within and between different religions and worldviews.

- Pupils use their thinking about stories of Moses and Jesus to explore how Jews and Christians today celebrate key events from their history (e.g. in Passover and Lent)
- Pupils list and describe similarities and differences in the ways different traditions express what 'belonging' means to them
- Linking to English, pupils find out about different forms of prayer and meditation in different religions and worldviews, and write some prayers or meditations suited to particular occasions and traditions. This is one point, among many, where RE can provide key opportunities for pupils' spiritual development.

**Note:** different dimensions of religion or worldview include, for example, narratives, beliefs, ethics, and social life

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<p>C1. Discuss and present thoughtfully their own and others' views on challenging questions about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, applying ideas of their own in different forms including (e.g.) reasoning, music, art and poetry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils discuss different perspectives on questions about the beginnings of life on Earth, so that they can describe different ways science and religions treat questions of origins</li> <li>• Linking with the expressive arts curriculum, pupils create works of art or music which express their understanding of what it means to belong to a religion or worldview</li> <li>• Pupils discuss and debate reasons why different people have different ideas about the divine e.g. whether God is real and what God is like.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> pupils are not required to express personal beliefs in any coercive way in RE; good RE encourages an open hearted and broad minded approach to different beliefs.</p>
<p>C2. Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the well-being of all, responding thoughtfully to ideas about community, values and respect.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils discover and explore what Jewish people, humanists and Christians teach about how people can live together for the well-being of all</li> <li>• Pupils discuss and apply ideas from different religious codes for living (e.g. Commandments, Precepts or Rules), to compile a charter of their own moral values, applying their ideas to issues of respect for all</li> <li>• Linking to Mathematics and Geography, pupils use local and national census statistics to develop accurate understanding of the religious plurality of their locality and of Britain today.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> This work offers valuable opportunities for engagement with religions with a significant local presence: pupils may learn about the contributions of, for example, Jains, Zoroastrians or members of the Bahá'í faith to inter faith work. These communities can also be studied elsewhere in the RE curriculum.</p>
<p>C3. Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including ideas about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair, and express their own ideas clearly in response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils apply their own ideas about justice and fairness to the work of three development charities such as Christian Aid, Islamic Relief and Oxfam</li> <li>• Pupils write persuasively about the reasons why people who have a particular religious background or non-religious worldview try to help people who are vulnerable (eg victims of natural disasters or prejudice, people who live with disabilities or people affected by war)</li> <li>• Linking to Citizenship Education, pupils consider the Ten Commandments (Jewish) and the Five Precepts (Buddhist), expressing their ideas about right and wrong in the light of their learning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> this is one point, among many, where RE can provide key opportunities for pupils' moral development.</p>

## Key stage 3

Students should extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews<sup>13</sup>, recognising their local, national and global context. Building on their prior learning, they learn to appreciate religions and worldviews in systematic ways. They should draw on a wide range of subject specific language confidently and flexibly, learning to use the concepts of religious study to describe the nature of religion. They should understand how beliefs influence the values and lives of individuals and groups, and how religions and worldviews have an impact on wider current affairs. They should be able to appraise the practices and beliefs they study with increasing discernment based on analysis, interpretation and evaluation, developing their capacity to articulate well-reasoned positions.

**More specifically students should be taught to:**

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<sup>13</sup>**Breadth:** in line with the law and the statement about breadth of learning on p15 above, good practice should enable pupils to study Christianity and at least two other examples of a religion or worldview through key stage 3 in a coherent and progressive way.

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## Examples and notes

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<p>A1. Explain and interpret ways that the history and culture of religions and worldviews influence individuals and communities, including a wide range of beliefs and practices, in order to appraise reasons why some people support and others question these influences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linking to History, students plan and report on an investigation into the impact of two key leaders, thinkers or founders of religions or worldviews on their communities or on individuals today</li> <li>• Students examine how spiritual experiences (such as sensing the presence of God, or the experience of answered prayer) have an impact on some members of different communities. They develop reasoned arguments to support their ideas about these kinds of claims or events</li> <li>• Linking to Geography, students investigate the demographics of Christianity, Judaism or Sikhism or 'No Religious belief' in their local area and wider region.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> this is an aspect of RE that provides many opportunities for students' social and cultural development.</p>
<p>A2. Explain and interpret a range of beliefs, teachings and sources of wisdom and authority including experience in order to understand religions and worldviews as coherent systems or ways of seeing the world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students develop their moral reasoning skills by studying moral ideas from Humanism about good ways to live. They compare these ideas with Christian sources of authority and wisdom, responding systematically</li> <li>• Students select and interpret texts from the Qur'an and Hadith to explain and exemplify their understanding of Muslim beliefs and ways of seeing the world</li> <li>• Students consider how sacred writings such as the Torah or the Bhagavad Gita, or other sources of wisdom, provide ethical guidance and spiritual nurture to members of different communities</li> <li>• Students consider why so many sources of wisdom and authority in religions and worldviews are men, and so few are women.</li> <li>• They appraise some sources of female wisdom, from within or beyond religions and worldviews</li> <li>• Students consider the importance of experience as a source of wisdom and authority including religious experience and everyday human experience.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> The focus on interpretation of religions and worldviews requires learners to be active in engaging with texts and issues and responding with reasoned ideas of their own.</p>
<p>A3. Explain how and why individuals and communities express the meanings of their beliefs and values in many different forms and ways of living, enquiring into the variety, differences and relationships that exist within and between them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students investigate the life, teaching and example of Jesus, responding to Christian theology and other views of his influence with their own interpretations and insights</li> <li>• Students plan an investigation into examples of daily practice of Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jewish people, Muslims and / or Sikhs in Britain, examining in particular some similarities and differences in spiritual practice, ethics, beliefs and community life</li> <li>• Students explore different ways of expressing beliefs and values in architecture, music, media and the arts, building their understanding of diversity within the religions and worldviews they study.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> The focus in this aim on expression and communication connects the ways people from different religious or non-religious backgrounds express their ideas to the ways learners themselves express their own ideas. Both are equally important in good RE learning.</p>

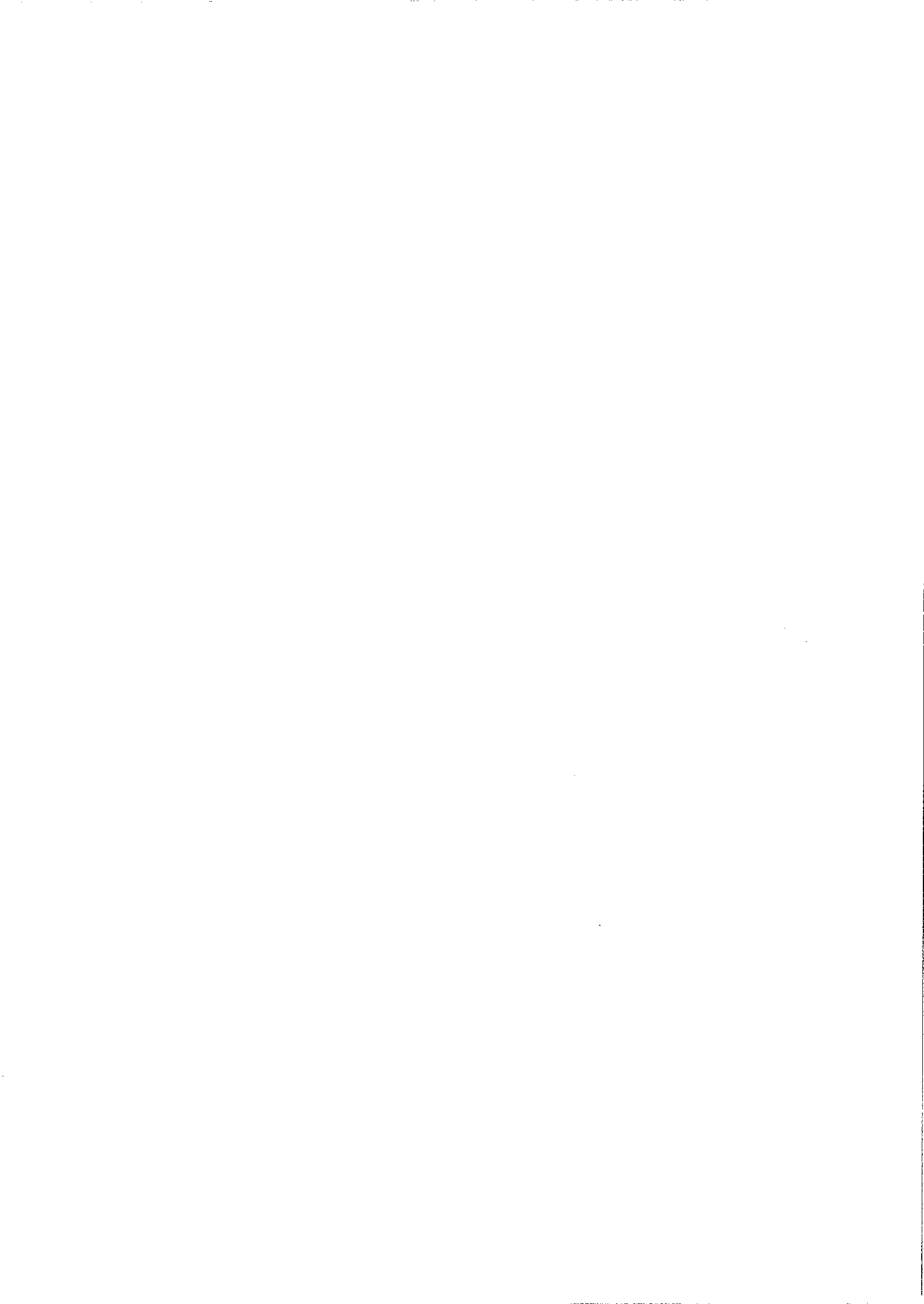
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## Examples and notes

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<p>B1. Explain the religions and worldviews which they encounter clearly, reasonably and coherently; evaluate them, drawing on a range of introductory level approaches recognised in the study of religion or theology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students plan, write and deliver an illustrated talk about different views of life after death, from, for example, a humanist, a Buddhist and a Christian, using arguments from philosophy of religion and human experience to evaluate varied ideas thoughtfully</li> <li>Students use ideas from the sociology of religion, the psychology of religion or the philosophy of religion to explain the appeal of a non-religious or a Buddhist, Islamic or Christian identity to millions of people in Britain and / or the wider world today</li> <li>Students experience dialogue between members of different religions and those who hold a non-religious worldview. They consider theological questions about truth that arise, giving reasons for the ideas they hold.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> in working to meet this aim, students may encounter religions and worldviews with a significant local presence, even if their national numbers are small. Examples might include members of the Bahá'í faith, Jains, Zoroastrians, Latter Day Saints or Jehovah's Witnesses.</p>
<p>B2. Observe and interpret a wide range of ways in which commitment and identity are expressed. They develop insightful analysis and evaluation of controversies about commitment to religions and worldviews, accounting for the impact of diversity within and between communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students investigate and evaluate in an essay the influence of some contemporary 'great lives' on religious communities and the wider world, weighing up ways in which the commitment of key leaders can inspire whole communities. They also consider questions about possible dangers of commitment</li> <li>Students use an ethnographic approach to interview believers representing diversity within a tradition about what makes religious living challenging in Britain today e.g. from Sunni and Shi'a Islam, Protestant and Catholic Christianity or Orthodox and Reform Judaism.</li> <li>Students select a religious controversy in current affairs to investigate (examples: What rights can migrant religious community members expect in the UK with regard to their religious practice? Why do some people convert from one religion to another? Why might some people from different religious groups or worldviews think that protecting the environment is not a major priority?)</li> </ul> <p>Students present arguments from both sides of the controversy to show their ability to analyse issues from different perspectives.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Engagement with controversial issues is at the heart of good RE and one aim of the subject is to enable respectful disagreement.</p>
<p>B3. Consider and evaluate the question: what is religion? Analyse the nature of religion using the main disciplines by which religion is studied.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students consider the questions: What is religion? What is a worldview? They develop skills to interpret claims made by different religions and worldviews about the nature of reality and the value of religion</li> <li>Students use methods of study from history, theology and philosophy to assemble a coherent case for their answer to the question: In the twenty first century world, is religion a force for good, or not?</li> <li>Students examine questions about whether religion and spirituality are similar or different, about how different religions and worldviews relate to each other and about collaboration and conflict between individuals and communities, including inter faith.</li> <li>Students consider questions about whether different religions are compatible or incompatible, in for example their ideas about God or the ultimate reality or deciding how to live a good life.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> it is in meeting this aim of RE that students build an understanding of religion itself as a phenomenon, rather than merely studying religions and worldviews one by one.</p>





## Requirements

Note: as this is not a statutory document, these are not legal requirements as in the national curriculum.

## Examples and notes

Note: the examples from religions and worldviews given below do not constitute a syllabus but illustrate what is meant in the first column

<p>C1. Explore some of the ultimate questions that are raised by human life, making well-informed and reasoned personal responses and expressing insights that draw on a wide range of examples including the arts, media and philosophy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linking to Science, students examine questions of origins and purpose in life (Where do we come from? Why are we here?)</li> <li>• Students develop insight into and understanding of why some people argue that science and religion can be compatible and others argue that they cannot</li> <li>• Linking to expressive arts, students investigate the ways drama, broadcast media and visual artists explore questions about the meaning of life, selecting and explaining examples that they find compelling and relating these to the teaching of different religions and worldviews</li> <li>• Students develop their skills in reasoning and constructing arguments by debating questions and dilemmas about the nature of human life and the moral responsibilities of being human.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> this aim in RE connects philosophical reasoning with other forms of expression, using the varied talents students bring to the subject.</p>
<p>C2. Examine and evaluate issues about community relations and respect for all in the light of different perspectives from varied religions and worldviews.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students consider what religions and worldviews say about what makes people happy. They seek and articulate explanations for links between character, well-being and happiness, especially in relation to living with difference in our communities</li> <li>• Linking to Citizenship Education and History, students consider responses to genocide from different religions, for example studying the thought, theology and activism of Primo Levi, Elie Wiesel and Dietrich Bonhoeffer in response to Nazism.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> this aim of RE provides significant opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</p>
<p>C3. Explore and express insights into significant moral and ethical questions posed by being human in ways that are well-informed and which invite personal response, using reasoning which may draw on a range of examples from real life, fiction or other forms of media.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students consider the impact of ethical choices. They could create a 'multi-path narrative' about a contemporary moral issue, showing what the consequences of different choices might be and evaluating the impact of moral choices with discernment</li> <li>• Students make compelling and reasonable connections between what religions and worldviews teach and what they say about issues such as starvation around the world, the sanctity of life, environmental ethics, war or prejudice</li> <li>• Students consider philosophical, ethical and religious questions about what it means to be human, for example questions posed in relation to the development of new medical technologies.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> this aim of RE provides significant opportunities for students' moral and social development.</p>

## Key stage 4 and RE 16-19

All students<sup>14</sup> should extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews, reflecting local, national and global contexts. Building on their prior learning, they appreciate and appraise the nature of different religions and worldviews in systematic ways. They should use a wide range of concepts in the field of Religious Studies confidently and flexibly to interpret, contextualise and analyse the expressions of religions and worldviews they encounter. They should be able to research and investigate the influence and impact of religions and worldviews on the values and lives of both individuals and groups, evaluating their impact on current affairs. They should be able to appreciate and appraise the beliefs and practices of different religions and worldviews with an increasing level of discernment based on interpretation, evaluation and analysis, developing and articulating well-reasoned positions. They should be able to use some of the different disciplines of Religious Studies (eg textual study, philosophical and sociological approaches) to analyse the nature of religion.

### More specifically students should be taught to:

- investigate and analyse the beliefs and practices of religions and worldviews using a range of arguments and evidence to interpret and evaluate issues and draw balanced conclusions;
- synthesise their own and others' ideas and arguments about sources of wisdom and authority using coherent reasoning, making clear and appropriate reference to their historical, cultural and social contexts;
- analyse in a coherent and well informed way the forms of expression and ways of life found in different religions and worldviews;
- use different disciplines and methods by which religions and worldviews are studied to analyse their influence on individuals and societies;
- account for varied interpretations of commitment to religions and worldviews and for responses to profound questions about the expression of identity, diversity, meaning and value;
- argue for and justify their own positions with regard to key questions about the nature of religion, providing a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others;
- enquire into and develop insightful evaluations of ultimate questions about the purposes and commitments of human life, especially as expressed in the arts, media and philosophy;
- use a range of research methods to examine and critically evaluate varied perspectives and approaches to issues of community cohesion, respect for all and mutual understanding, locally, nationally and globally;
- use ideas from phenomenological approaches to the study of religions and beliefs to research and present skilfully a wide range of well-informed and reasonable arguments which engage profoundly with moral, religious and spiritual issues.

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<sup>14</sup>All state funded schools must teach RE to all students on school rolls, including all those in 14-19 education, unless withdrawn by their parents (or by themselves if aged 18 or over). It is important that teaching enables progression from the end of key stage 3, in ways that meet the varied learning needs of all students. All students can reasonably expect their learning will be accredited. These modes of accreditation include nationally accredited courses in RE such as GCSE and A level RS. Good practice examples include many schools of different types where all students take GCSE RS or other accredited courses at 16. Requirements are different in FE and sixth form colleges (see:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0064886/religious-education-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>)